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ART. V.—*Indian Biography.*

Collections of the Maine Historical Society. Vol. I. Portland. 1831.

We notice this book with no little pleasure, as a new illustration of the great benefits to be reasonably expected from the formation of societies, having for their object the collection and preservation of the materials of history. Without doubt much has already been lost, in this country as in all others, which such associations might have rescued in due time; but much, also, has been searched out, simplified, systematized and put on record, for the good and the gratification of other ages. It speaks well for the future, as well as the present works of the Maine Society, that its list of members comprises the names of a great number of the ablest and most distinguished citizens of the State, not a few of whom have heretofore done much for the interests of science. The history of Portland, occupying half this volume, has been drawn up by Mr. Willis of that place, with remarkable accuracy and clearness. The contributions which come from the manuscripts of the late Governor Lincoln, and which are chiefly upon various subjects of Indian literature, will be read, perhaps we should say studied, with peculiar interest. A mass of additional information, we are happy to perceive, is to be expected from the same source, upon the same subjects. The native tribes of Maine,—with the exception of the far-famed Tarratines, and the Narantsouacks or Norridgewocks, while connected with Father Rallé,—have as yet made little figure in history; but we have long been satisfied, from personal investigation, as well as general and analogous reasoning, that many interesting facts respecting them may be hereafter disclosed. The movements of the Maine Society, in this department, will be observed with more than ordinary solicitude.

Under the title placed at the head of this article, we have heretofore* enlarged upon the lives and characters of some of the most distinguished individuals, who have appeared among the North American natives. The present seems to us a favorable opportunity, for pursuing farther inquiries of the same nature. While the materials necessary to that end are quite as easy of access, and quite as satisfactory, in point of quantity

* See No. 73, N. A. Review.

and quality, as they are likely to be at any future period, a stronger interest than usual is felt in every thing which relates to the Indians. And there is reason for such an interest. A great crisis has arrived in the relations existing between the tribes of that remarkable race, and the civilized and Christian population, which presses upon their borders. The passions of the public mind are excited for and against them. Avarice and ambition look with an eager eye upon the fertile territories, where their last remnants yet linger about the haunts of their childhood and the graves of their fathers. Then philanthropy interferes; new and old plans of civilization and amalgamation are brought forward. Then pride is roused, and prejudice exasperated. But, meanwhile, the rights of the people, who occasion all this excitement, and the respect consequently due to them, must come to be discussed. In this discussion, their original constitution, moral and intellectual, and especially their collective and individual competency for civilized life, are involved; and here it is, that history and biography should be made to render their services. It is not speculation or theory that is needed,—but facts, plain facts.

It has often occurred to us, that the latter of the two departments of Indian literature just named, has been singularly overlooked. Journals, and travels, and narratives, and publications of almost every other name and nature, have been filled, year after year,—from the period of Father Hennepin's first journey among the Illinois, down to the last doleful, catch-penny sketch of the last captive among the 'barbarous and bloody heathen,'—with delineations of the Indian manners, customs and institutions. The ablest philologists of Europe and America have made their languages the study of years. Others have devoted themselves to investigations respecting their origin, their antiquities, their history; and in all these departments has philosophy been amply remunerated for its labors. Why is it, then, that Indian biography has been forgotten? Why have no lives been given, or attempted to be given, of the great men and the wise men of this singular race,—their orators and conquerors, patriots and prophets? Why is so little known, when so much might be known, of Pontiac and Uncas, of Piskaret, of Garangula and Logan? Had such men lived in civilized society, their achievements and their eloquence would have occupied volumes of eulogy. Why, under circumstances which only make them more remarkable and more admirable, should their

memories be given over utterly to oblivion? Alas! their armor was the tomahawk, and not the lance. They wore the blanket for the *toga*. They painted with vermilion instead of *rouge*.

The name of Tecumseh* is comparatively familiar to modern readers, for the same obvious reason, that *King Philip* was like a household word, a century and a half ago. But his character, we conceive, has been often misunderstood and misrepresented. The means are within our reach, of forming true and fair opinions; but the relations existing between the two races, and between individuals belonging to them, especially during his life-time, have had a tendency to create prepossessions, and to conceal facts. Such was the fortune of Philip himself; and though the change which has taken place since his time in the situation of the country, made Tecumseh a much less terrible, and therefore less obnoxious enemy, than the Sachem of Pokanoket,—this very circumstance, on the other hand, has probably had its effect in disparaging the reputation of the former. Philip lived at a period, and among a people, which gave him some prospect of *success*. But Tecumseh's exertions were hopeless. He was feared too little to be duly appreciated, as the other was feared too much. He was contemned, comparatively, as the other was hated.

As Tecumseh was by birth a member of the Kiskópoke tribe of the Shawanee† nation, a brief account of this somewhat celebrated community will not be considered irrelevant in this connexion. Mr. Heckewelder, who knew the Shawanees personally, as well as by reputation, for many years, calls them a courageous, high-spirited, and manly people; 'and more careful in providing a supply of ammunition to keep in reserve for an emergency, than any other nation he ever heard of.' These remarks are decidedly confirmed by their history. As their

* The Indian pronunciation of this word is Tecumthé. It has been sometimes written Tecumtha, and sometimes Tecumsah; but the orthography adopted in the text is the most common.

† This ill-fated word has been subject to even more than the ordinary liberties, exercised upon Indian terms. The vernacular plural, we suppose, is Shawanock or Shawaneuk; but almost every foreign writer has invented his own combination. Heckewelder has it Shawanos, and Sawanos; the latter being the name generally given them by other tribes. Others use Shawanoes, Shawannoes, Shawanese; and still more, Shawonoese. All these are derived from the Delaware word Shawaneu, meaning *South*, and referring to the origin of the nation, as described above.

name indicates, they came originally from the south; and the oldest individuals of the Mohican tribe, their *elder brother*, told Mr. Heckewelder, that they dwelt in the neighborhood of Savannah in Georgia, and in the Floridas. 'They were a restless people,' we are further informed, 'delighting in wars;' and in these they were so constantly engaged, that their neighbors,—the Cherokees, Choctaws, Creeks, Yamassees, and other powerful tribes,—finally formed a league, offensive and defensive, for the express purpose of expelling them from the country. But the Shawanees were too wise to contend with such an enemy, and they adopted the more prudent policy of asking permission to leave their territories peaceably, and migrate northward. This favor being granted them, their main body settled upon the Ohio; some of them as far up as where the French afterwards built Fort Duquesne,—now Pittsburg,—others, about the forks of the Delaware, and a few even upon the site of what is now Philadelphia. It is worth observing, how soon their belligerent disposition manifested itself among their new acquaintances. Those who remained on the Ohio becoming numerous and powerful, it was not long before they crossed the Alleghany mountains, and fell upon a settlement of the Delawares, on the Juniata,—of which very people, their *grandfather*,* they had solicited peace and protection, through the interposition of the Mohicans, on their first arrival in the country. Murders were committed, plunder was carried off, and a war ensued. As soon as this was fairly off their hands, they engaged in the French war, which broke out in 1755, against the English. That being terminated in 1763, and the tribe being elated by its increased numbers, and by the strong confederacy now established between themselves and the Delawares, they commenced hostilities against the Cherokees. In the course of this war, the latter occasionally pursued the aggressors into the Delaware territories, and thus that nation was aroused again. The union of forces which ensued, added to the already existing hostility of the Five Nations, proved too much for the Cherokees, and in 1768, they solicited and ob-

* A title given to this ancient people, by about forty other tribes. The *Mohicans* were called the *Elder Brother*, because their separation from the parent stock was one of the most ancient, of which the tradition was distinctly preserved. Following the same principle, the Delawares themselves have uniformly given the title of *Uncle* to the Wyandots; thus acknowledging *their* seniority over all other tribes.

tained a peace. Owing chiefly to the influence of the Delawares, the Shawanees were now kept quiet for the unusually long term of six years, when they were involved in a war with the people of Virginia,—then comprising Kentucky,—occasioned by the noted murders committed upon Logan's relations and others, by white people. The burning of some of their villages had scarcely driven them to a sort of truce with this new enemy, when the war of the Revolution commenced, in which they allied themselves with the English, and continued openly hostile, notwithstanding the peace of 1783, until the famous victory and treaty of General Wayne, in 1795.

It seems to be universally understood, that their reputation, as warriors, suffered nothing during all this long series of hostile operations. The first settlers of Kentucky were molested and harassed by them, more than by any other tribe. Boone, who was taken captive by them, in 1778, saw four hundred and fifty of their warriors mustered at one place,—still called Chillicothe,—ready for a foray among the white settlements, which soon after ensued. Marshall, in his History of Kentucky, gives the particulars of an expedition against them, the season after this, in which 'many of the best men in the country were privates;' the invaders were defeated and driven off, and nearly two hundred of them pursued, with considerable loss, by about thirty of the Shawanees. 'Of all the Indians who had been marauding in the country,' the same writer observes elsewhere, 'the Shawanees had been the most mischievous, as they were the most active.' Loskiel, who wrote the History of the Mission of United Brethren among the North American natives, represents the tribe in question as 'the most *savage* of the Indian nations.'

An incident, showing the disposition which they manifested, even at this period, (1773) towards their American neighbors, may throw some light upon their character, and upon subsequent events. The celebrated missionary Zeisberger visited some of their settlements, during the year last named, in the hope of establishing a mission among them. At one of their villages, he met with the head chief of the tribe. The latter gave him his hand and addressed him; 'This day,' said he, 'the Great Spirit has ordered that we should see and speak with each other, face to face.' He then entered into a long detail of the practices of the white people, describing their manner of deceiving the Indians, and finally affirmed that they

were all alike,—all hypocrites and knaves. The missionary made some reply to these charges, but the chief was ‘so exceedingly exasperated against the white people,’ adds Loskiel, that brother Zeisberger’s exhortation seemed to have little weight with him. He at length gave the preacher permission to visit the other Shawanese towns, taking care to suggest, as a parting word of comfort, that he must rely upon having his brains beat out very speedily. Thirty years previous to this, when Count Zinzendorff himself went among the Wyoming Shawanees to convert them, they rewarded that pious pilgrim for his labor of love, by conspiring to murder him; but by a fortunate accident, he escaped safe from their hands. On the whole, setting aside for the present the history of this nation for the last thirty years, during which we have suffered most from them, it would seem that a more warlike or more hostile people has scarcely existed upon the continent. Where, rather than here, should we look for the birth and education of the modern Philip, and when, rather than at the stormy period of the Revolution? Probably, at the very time when the troops of our Congress (in 1780,) were expelling them westward from the river Scioto, and burning their villages behind them, the young hero, who afterwards kindled the flame of war upon the entire frontier of the States, by the breath of his own single spirit, was learning his first lessons of vengeance amid the ruins of his native land, and in the blood of his countrymen.

His native land, we say, for it is tolerably well ascertained that he was born on the banks of the Scioto, near Chillicothe. His father, who was a noted Shawanee warrior, fell at the battle of Kenawa, while Tecumseh was yet a mere boy. His mother is said by some to have been a Shawanee, and by others a Creek; but he is understood himself to have told a gentleman at Vincennes, in 1810, that she was a Cherokee, who had been taken prisoner in a war between that nation and the Shawanees, and adopted, according to Indian custom, into a family of the latter nation, which resided near the Miami of the Lake.* This account is confirmed by the circumstance of this woman having migrated into the Cherokee territory in advanced age, and died there. The *totem* of her tribe is said to have been a turtle, and that of the father’s a tiger.

* Note to Schoolcraft’s Travels, page 138. Mr. S. has given some interesting information respecting Tecumseh, from authorities of which he was personally assured.

From all the information which can now be gathered respecting the early years of Tecumseh, it appears that he gave striking evidence in his boyhood of the singular spirit, which characterized him through life. He was distinguished for a steady adherence to principle, and generally to that of the best kind. He prided himself upon his temperance and his truth, maintaining an uncommon reputation for integrity, and, what is still rarer among his countrymen, never indulging in the excessive use of food or liquor. He would not marry until long after the customary period ; and then, as a matter of necessity, in consequence of the solicitations of friends, he seems to have connected himself with an old woman, who was perhaps not the handsomest or most agreeable lady in the world, but who nevertheless bore him one child, his only offspring. With this exception, he adopted in his matrimonial life certain *practices* of the sect of Shakers, whose *principles*, as is well known, were afterwards so strenuously promulgated by his brother, the Prophet, that a certain prime functionary in that denomination gave him the credit of being as good a disciple as himself.* Whether there was an express concert or actual co-operation between the two, at this early period, respecting this or any other project or policy in which they subsequently engaged together, does not appear to be positively ascertained.

It is not to be supposed, that any remarkable achievements of the young warrior in his first battles, should be preserved on record. The Shawanees relate, that he made his *debut* in an engagement with the Kentucky troops, which took place on the banks of Mad river. In the heat of the skirmish, he most ungallantly turned right-about-face, and made the best of his way from the field, with all possible diligence, and that too while one of his brothers stood his ground with the other Indians, and fought till he was wounded and carried off. It must be admitted, that this was not so creditable a proceeding as may be conceived ; but the extreme youth of the party goes some way to explain, as his subsequent conduct did to excuse it. But from this time, whatever might be his animal courage, he was never known to shrink. Indeed, previously to the treaty of Greenville, (in 1795) when he was probably about twenty-five years of age, he is said to have signalized himself so much, as to have been reputed one of the boldest of the Indian warriors. No

* See an authority cited at large in the following pages.

individual was more regularly engaged in those terrible incursions, by which the first settlers of Kentucky were so much harassed ; and few could boast of having intercepted so many boats on the Ohio river, or plundered so many houses on the civilized shore. He was sometimes pursued, but never overtaken. If the enemy advanced into his own country, he retreated to the banks of the Wabash, until the storm had passed by ; and then, just as they were laying aside the sword for the axe and ploughshare, swooped down upon them again in their own settlements. It goes to show the disinterested generosity always ascribed to him, that, although the booty collected in the course of these adventures must have been very considerable in quantity and value, he rarely retained any portion of it for his own use. His ruling passion was the love of glory, as that of his followers was the love of gain ; and of course a compromise could always be effected between them, to the perfect satisfaction of both parties. He was a feudal baron among boors. It remained for subsequent occasions, then little dreamed of, to show that his temperament, like his talent, was even better adapted to the management of a large engagement, than to the *melée* of a small one.

We have now arrived at an epoch in his life, when it is no longer possible to give his own history to much advantage, but by connecting with it that of his celebrated brother, the prophet already mentioned. The name of this personage was Elskwátawa.* He and Tecumseh, and still another, Kumsháka, were the offspring of the same mother at the same birth. Probably there was an understanding between the three, at an early date, respecting the great plans which the prophet and the orator afterwards carried into execution ; but as we hear little or nothing of the subsequent co-operation of Kumsháka, it may be presumed that he did not live,—employment would certainly have been found for him, if he had. It has been said, that it was about the year 1806, when his two brothers first conceived their design of uniting all the Western Indians in a war against the Americans. But it appears to us probable, that the main project was older than this, although the *minutiæ* of it never were or could be agreed upon at any one time.

* Meaning, says Mr. Schoolcraft, *a fire that is moved from place to place*. Elsewhere we find him called Olliwayshila, on good authority. A compromise may be effected, by suggesting that he assumed various names at various periods.

Whether it was Tecumseh's alone, or the Prophet's alone, in the first instance,—or the result of the joint deliberations of the two, cannot now be determined. The better opinion, perhaps, favors the first theory; with the qualification, however, that the Prophet was for many years the only and intimate confidant, and probably on many occasions the counsellor of his brother. He contented himself, at all events, with being a subordinate actor in the play, from first to last, though he was by no means an insignificant one.

It has been very generally understood, that either this man's brain was affected by some accident, or that he had the good fortune to be naturally possessed of a certain species of mind, or rather want of mind, which most of the Indians hold in peculiar esteem. This may have been true, but we think the probabilities of the case are in favor of a different supposition,—to wit,—that his frenzy was feigned; and that his brother instigated and instructed him to make an important use of it, in the promotion of the grand scheme, which was secretly exercising the ingenuity and fostering the ambition of both. It goes against the former theory, that those who are best acquainted with Elskwatawa, and especially such as knew him personally, were the least suspicious of any deficiency in his intellect. Take the evidence of General Harrison, for example, who had repeated opportunities of closely scrutinizing his conduct and conversation. The author of the *Life of that gentleman*, published at Cincinnati in 1828, in speaking of a visit of a fortnight from the Prophet, in August, 1808, observes, that 'the Governor discovered him to be possessed of considerable talents.' Again, 'his astonishment was excited, by the address and art with which he managed the Indians.' It could by no possible means be gathered from his language, whether he was or was not under British influence. That point, indeed, never was ascertained satisfactorily by any American; and so far was General Harrison in particular from gaining it, that his biographer frankly admits him to have been 'completely deceived' by 'this fellow's' profound subtilty, notwithstanding both the special prejudice he had previously formed against him, and the general knowledge he possessed of Indian cunning and duplicity.

All this, we say, with the entire mass of evidence of the same kind, which might be produced, goes strongly against

the theory of the Prophet's having been a man of inferior intellect. On the other hand, there are many circumstances to corroborate a different impression, one of the strongest of which is the very part which he acted *as* Prophet. So far as we can judge, that was precisely the course, of all others, calculated to advance most surely and most speedily, the common scheme of the two brothers for a belligerent union of the tribes. No principle in the Indian character has been more thoroughly or more universally ascertained, than their excessive superstition. Hence the great influence, which has always and every where been exercised over them by their most talented, though sometimes unprincipled men, under the various titles of powahs, jugglers, sorcerers, physicians, wizards, and prophets, by every conceivable method of imposture. 'The American impostors are not behindhand with any, in this point; and as by chance, (if we will not allow the devil any share in it,) they sometimes happen to divine or guess pretty right, they acquire by this a great reputation; they are reckoned *genii* of the first order.' Thus it was in Charlevoix's time. Heckewelder dwells more at length upon this weakness in the American native. 'It sinks him down,' is his language, 'this childish apprehension of an occult and unknown power, to the level of the most fearful and timid being.' Among other illustrations of this point, he gives the confession of a sorcerer to an intimate English acquaintance, respecting the secret of his management. Such was the credulity of this man's countrymen, according to his own testimony, that if he only picked a little wool from his blanket, and rolled it between his fingers into a small round ball, that was sufficient to establish his reputation. A general apprehension was excited among his spectators; and if at that moment, he happened to cast so much as a side-glance at any particular man, the victim was at once selected, convicted, and executed. In ninety-nine cases out of one hundred, he would sooner or later perish under the terror inflicted thus by his own credulity.

So much for the general feasibility of the Prophet's plan. The *minutiæ* of it furnish still better evidence of his shrewdness. It will be sufficient for our present purpose, to remark upon these so far, as to show them to have been such as were best adapted to effect the grand political objects, which we suppose to been masked under a show of religion. He inculcated, in the first place, that a radical reform was necessary in

the manners of the red people. This was proved, by enlarging upon the evils which had ensued from the neighborhood of the whites,—the imitation of their dress and manners, the introduction of ardent spirits, diseases, contentions, and wars; by the vast diminution of the means of subsistence, and the narrowed limits of territory to which they were now hemmed in, and by other considerations of the most irritating, as well as plausible kind, the force of which was not at all lessened by occasional comment on particular transactions, and glowing references to the long, peaceful and happy lives of their forefathers. This point being gained, and a favorable excitement produced, the next thing in order was his own commission from the Great Spirit. This was authenticated by the astonishing miracles he was able to perform, and still more, by the great benefits he was able to confer on his followers. The budget of reform was then brought forward. There was to be no more fighting between the tribes,—they were brethren. They were to abandon the use of ardent spirits, and to wear skins, as their ancestors had done, instead of blankets. Stealing, quarrelling, and other immoral modern habits were denounced. Injunctions of minor importance seem to have been enforced, merely with a view to test the pliability of savage superstition, to embarrass the jealous scrutiny of those who opposed or doubted, and to establish a superficial uniformity, whereby the true believers should be readily distinguished. The policy of the more prominent tenets cannot be mistaken. Just in proportion to their observance, they must inevitably promote the independence of the Indian nations, first, by diminishing their dependence upon the whites, and secondly, by increasing their intercourse and harmony with each other.

In addressing himself to such subjects, with such a system, *Elskwáta* could hardly fail of success. For some years, indeed, his converts were few; for great as the influence is, which a man of his pretensions exercises over his ignorant countrymen, when his reputation is once fairly acquired, it is by no means so easy an undertaking, to acquire it in the outset. The extent and permanence of his success, in fact, are more conclusive as to his talent, than the mere conception and adoption of the policy. This was comparatively commonplace, and a common-place personage might undertake it. Mr. Tanner, who published, a year or two since, a very interesting narrative of his residence of thirty years among the In-

dians, has given incidental sketches of as many as three or four pretenders. Some of them were laughed at for their pains. Others obtained a temporary credence; but we hear nothing of them beyond a year or two. Elskwatawa was at this very period extending his reputation from tribe to tribe, over the whole West. Difficulties and discouragements were encountered by him; but he nevertheless persevered and prevailed. His first establishment consisted of about one hundred warriors of his own tribe, whom he had very artfully convinced, or at least conciliated, by preaching up the superiority of the Shawanees over every other people under Heaven. This doctrine, however, was not calculated for general use; and the prophet had scarcely collected his partisans around him at Greenville, when his efforts to add to their number from other tribes,—and upon other grounds, of course,—compelled him to modify his theory so much, that about half of his own countrymen deserted him. But their place was soon supplied by stragglers, who came in from various quarters. In June, 1807, the United States' agent at Fort Wayne wrote to General Harrison, then governor of Indiana Territory, that not fewer than fifteen hundred Indians had passed that station, on their way to hear the preaching of the Shawanese Prophet. In the course of this season, the effects of his exhortations became so palpable, as to excite some apprehension among the white settlements on the frontiers. Suspicious movements were visible among the Kickapoos, and among portions of the Potawatamies, Chippewas and Ottawas. In 1809, the Prophet removed from Greenville to Tippecanoe, on the upper part of the Wabash, and his disciples followed in his train. During the next year, rumors of war became prevalent, and though the preacher had a little before this been nearly deserted, he was now reported to have more than one thousand individuals under his entire control. The Wyandots, and many of the Winebagoes had joined him; and the warlike Sacs and Foxes followed soon afterwards. Meanwhile, murders and other outrages are said to have taken place in the vicinity of the Prophet's settlement. A general alarm existed among the whites, throughout Indiana and Illinois. Measures had already been taken, under the immediate charge of Governor Harrison, for the defence of the frontiers; and of Vincennes in particular, where the first onset of the enemy was expected. The attention of the General Government itself was by this time so much aroused, that a proposal

from the President to make prisoners of both Tecumseh and his brother was suspended, only that a last effort might be more advantageously made, for a compromise with the disaffected tribes. Early in 1811, the Indian force mustered at Tippecanoe was larger, than Governor Harrison himself could easily collect; and the body-guard of Tecumseh, on the visit which he paid the former at Vincennes, in July of this season, consisted of more than three hundred men.

This meeting took place ostensibly in consequence of a *speech*, which the Governor had sent to the brothers at their encampment on the Wabash, in June. He had taken that occasion to repeat his former complaints of the insults and injuries he supposed to have been offered to American citizens, by Indians under their influence; to inform them that he had heard of their recent attempts to hasten hostilities between the Union and various Indian tribes; and, finally, to remind them in strong terms, of the consequences of persisting in this conduct. ‘Brothers!’—was one of the expressions in this speech,—‘I am, myself, of the Long-knife fire. As soon as they hear my voice, you will see them pouring forth their swarms of hunting-shirt men, as numerous as the mosquitoes on the shores of the Wabash. Brothers! take care of their stings.’ Tecumseh promptly replied to this communication, by promising to visit the Governor in precisely eighteen days, for the purpose of ‘washing away all these bad stories.’ Some delay occurred; but upon Saturday, the 27th of July, he made his appearance at Vincennes, with his three hundred followers. As neither the Governor nor the inhabitants generally were desirous of prolonging his entertainment, it was proposed to commence the negotiations on Monday; but this he declined doing, and it was late on Tuesday before he made his appearance, at the arbor prepared for the occasion. Nor did he then come, without taking the precaution to ascertain previously, whether the Governor was to be attended by armed men at the council,—if so, he should adopt the same etiquette. Being left to his own option, and given to understand that his example would be imitated, he came with a guard of nearly two hundred men, some armed with bows and arrows, and others with knives, tomahawks, and war-clubs. The Governor, on the other hand, was attended by a full troop of dragoons, dismounted, and completely furnished with fire-arms; and he had taken care, on Tecumseh’s first arrival, to secure the town, by sta-

tioning two foot companies and a detachment of cavalry in the outskirts. He placed himself in front of his dragoons ; Tecumseh stood at the head of his tawny band, and the conference was commenced with a speech on the part of the Governor. This was briefly replied to ; but a heavy rain coming on, matters remained in *statu quo*, until the next day, when Tecumseh made a long and ingenious harangue, both exposing and justifying his own schemes, much more openly than he had ever done before. Respecting the demand which the Governor had made, that two Potawatamie murderers should be given up to punishment, who were stated to be resident at Tippecanoe, he, in the first place, denied that they were there ; and then went on very deliberately to show, that he could not deliver them up if they were there. ‘It was not right,’ he said, to ‘punish those people. They ought to be forgiven, *as well as those who had recently murdered his people in the Illinois*. The whites should follow his own example of forgiveness ; *he* had forgiven the Ottawas and the Osages. Finally, he desired that matters might remain in their present situation, and especially that no settlements should be attempted upon the lands recently purchased of certain tribes, until he should return from a visit among the Southern Indians. *Then*, he would go to Washington, and settle all difficulties with the President ; and meanwhile, as the neighboring tribes were wholly under his direction, he would despatch messengers in every quarter to prevent further mischief.’ He concluded with offering the Governor a quantity of wampum, as a full atonement for the murders before mentioned. The latter made an indignant rejoinder ; the meeting was broken up, and Tecumseh, attended by a few followers, soon afterwards commenced his journey down the Wabash for the southward.

Such was the last appearance of Tecumseh, previously to the war. The popular excitement now became greater than ever. Meetings were held, and representations and resolutions forwarded to the Federal Executive. But before these documents could reach their destination, authority had been given to Governor Harrison, to commence offensive operations, *if necessary*, and forces, in addition to those under his territorial jurisdiction, were placed at his disposal. ‘The banditti under the Prophet,’ says the secretary,—Mr. Eustis,—in a communication of July 20th, ‘are to be attacked and vanquished, provided such a measure shall be rendered absolutely neces-

sary.' It is not our purpose to detail the subsequent measures of Governor Harrison, which terminated in the celebrated battle of Tippecanoe; and much less, to agitate the question heretofore so inveterately contested, respecting the general propriety of the offensive operations he commenced, or his particular system or success in conducting them. The battle took place on the seventh of November, 1811; the Governor having previously sent Indian messengers to demand of the various tribes in the Prophet's encampment, that they should all return to their respective territories; that the stolen horses in their and his possession, should be given up; and that all murderers, then sheltered at Tippecanoe, should be delivered over to justice. The first messengers, about the last of September, had the effect of bringing out a friendly deputation from the Prophet, full of professions of peace. But fresh outrages were committed by his followers about the same time; and, when sundry headmen of the Delaware tribe undertook, in October, to go upon a second mission, they are said to have been abruptly met by a counter deputation from the Prophet, requiring a categorical answer to the question, 'whether they would or would not join *him* against the United States?' The Delawares, nevertheless, went on, and having visited the Prophet's camp, returned to Governor Harrison, now on his march, with the report of their having been ill-treated, insulted, and finally dismissed with contemptuous remarks upon themselves and the Governor. Twenty-four Miamies next volunteered to go upon this thankless business. They seem to have been better entertained, for the good reason, that they decided upon raising the tomahawk against their employer. At all events, these serviceable diplomatists spared themselves the pains of returning.

The particulars of the battle are well known. The Governor having entered into the heart of the territory occupied by the Prophet,—but claimed by the United States, as being purchased of those tribes who had the least disputed claim to it,—he encamped on the night of the 6th, in the vicinity of the Prophet's force; and a suspension of hostilities was agreed upon between the two parties, until a conference could take place on the ensuing day. Whether, as the Prophet affirmed on this occasion by his messengers, he had sent a pacific proposal to the Governor, which accidentally failed to reach him; or whether he was now actually 'desirous of avoiding hostilities if possible,' but felt himself compelled to commence them, need not be

discussed. His forces, supposed to number from five hundred to eight hundred warriors, made a violent attack on the American army, early in the morning of the 7th; and one of the most desperate struggles ensued, of which we have any record in the history of Indian warfare. The enemy was at length repulsed, leaving thirty-eight warriors dead on the field. The Americans lost about fifty killed, and about twice that number wounded. The Prophet's town was rifled, and the army commenced its return to Vincennes.

The sequel of the mere history of the two brothers, familiar as this portion of it is to all readers, may be soon told. Tecumseh, who was absent,—at the South, as is generally believed,—when the battle took place, returned soon afterwards, and without doubt was exceedingly surprised and mortified by the conduct of the Prophet. From this time, while the latter lost much of his influence, the former took a more independent and open part. Whether he had previously maintained a special understanding with the British, cannot be positively decided; but his subsequent course admits of little controversy. He proposed to Governor Harrison, to make the contemplated journey to Washington; but, as the Governor expressed a determination that he should not go in the capacity which he deemed suitable to his standing, the idea was abandoned. Thenceforth, whatever his intentions *had* been, he determined upon the necessity of fighting; and it naturally followed, whatever had been his disposition towards the British authorities,—theirs towards him admits of no question,—that he should no longer hesitate to avail himself of every fair opportunity of co-operation. In July, 1812, Captain Wells wrote to Governor Harrison, from Fort Wayne, that Tecumseh had called there recently, 'on his way to Malden, to receive from the British Government twelve horse-loads of ammunition, for the use of his people at Tippecanoe.' Immediately after this, he openly joined his new allies, became *Brigadier-General Tecumseh*, and unquestionably rendered the most essential services, especially in raising and retaining the Indian forces. During the first months of the war, his whole time was devoted to recruiting. He was present, however, at the siege of Fort Meigs; and upon the famous 5th of May, 1812, commanded the co-operating savage force, on the south-east side of the river. At the second assault on Fort Meigs, in July, he was also present. Again, while the siege of Sandusky was going

on, we find him at the head of two thousand warriors, reconnoitring the position of General Harrison. In the decisive battle of the Moravian Towns, he commanded the right wing of the allied army, and was himself posted in the only part of it, which was engaged with the American troops. Here was his last struggle. Disdaining to fly, when all were flying around him but his own nearest followers, he himself pressed eagerly into the very heart of the contest, encouraging the savages by his voice, and plying the tomahawk with tremendous energy. He appeared to be advancing, it is said, directly upon Colonel Johnson, who was pressing forward, on the other side, at the head of his mounted infantry. Suddenly, a wavering was perceived in the Indian ranks. There was no longer a voice of command among them. Tecumseh had fallen, and his bravest and best men, still remaining, were disheartened and defeated by the same blow which prostrated him. That they did their share of fighting in this engagement fully appears from the fact, that thirty-three of them were found dead on the battle-ground,—chiefly near Tecumseh,—and that many were slain in the pursuit, while the number of British killed was but twelve. It is much disputed, to whom belongs the honor of shooting Tecumseh; upon which,—as every body admits that he was shot,—we shall spend but few words. In the language of a writer upon this question, ‘there is a possibility, that he fell by a pistol-shot from the hand of Colonel Johnson. He was certainly killed in that part of the line, where the Colonel was himself wounded;’ and this is nearly all, we suppose, which can or need be said upon the subject. The British Government granted a pension to his widow and family, which probably continues to this day. The Prophet also was supplied in the same manner, from the close of the war until his death, which took place a few years since.

The reputation of this man, as we have heretofore intimated of his brother, has suffered from the complete ultimate failure of his plans. It has suffered the more,—particularly among his own countrymen,—from the very circumstances which mark him as an extraordinary man,—his career as a prophet. Tecumseh knew his own talents better, than to play a game like this: but he also knew, without doubt, that Elskwátawa was capable of doing more for the advancement of their common object, by acting this co-ordinate or subordinate part, than by adopting the same course with himself, even had he

possessed the same species of ability. Together, they were endowed with a complete system of qualities necessary to accomplish their design, but neither could act alone. Tecumseh was frank, warlike, persuasive in his oratory, popular in his manners, irreproachable in his habits of life. Elskwátawa had more cunning than courage; and a stronger disposition to talk, than to fight, or exert himself in any other way. But he was subtle, fluent, persevering and self-possessed, and this was enough. He suddenly became an inspired man, and Tecumseh was his first convert. Possibly some others of their tribe were intrusted with the secret. They had, at all events, a great respect for these men, and being both a proud and warlike people, they received with avidity the well-contrived doctrine of their superiority over other tribes, and entered upon a course of projects, likely to produce war,—though of war nothing might be yet seen or said,—with the fury of blood-hounds upon a track. Hence the murders and robberies which so much alarmed and irritated the frontier settlers, and which we have very little doubt were generally committed by individuals of the Prophet's 'banditti,' without his authority, and perhaps against his wishes. The young men, especially, who gathered about him, like the young men who brought on the war of King Philip, were wrought up till the master-spirit himself lost his control over them; and to make the matter worse, most of them were of such a character, in the first instance, that horse-stealing and house-breaking were as easy to them as breathing. Like the refugees of Romulus, they were outcasts, vagabonds and criminals, in a great degree brought together by the novelty of the preacher's reputation, by curiosity to hear his doctrines, by the fascination of extreme credulity, by restlessness, by resentment against the whites, and by poverty and unpopularity at home.

These things should be taken into consideration, when the success of the Prophet is estimated. His ingenuity was tasked to the utmost, in getting and keeping these people together in the first place. Then it was necessary to instruct them just so far, as to put them in the way of preparing themselves for what might happen, and to make them serviceable in collecting and convincing others, without committing the cause too unreservedly to noisy tongues, and to rash hands. Then, complaints were made by American authorities, and these must be pacified. Offers of assistance came in from other quarters, and

these must be kept secret. In a word, emergencies of every kind were occurring from day to day, which nothing, but the most ready invention and the shrewdest sagacity on the part of the two brothers, could have prevented from ruining the cause.

As an instance in point, we may mention the circumstance that the chiefs of many Indian tribes were their strongest opponents. They were jealous or suspicious of the new pretenders, ridiculed and reproached them, and thwarted their exertions in every possible way. What was to be done with these persons? Here was an opportunity for the peculiar genius of Elskwátawa to exert itself, and he was not long at a loss. He availed himself of a new department of that unfailing superstition, which had hitherto befriended him; and a charge of witchcraft was brought up. His satellites and scouts being engaged in all directions, in ascertaining who were, or were likely to be, his friends or his enemies, it was readily determined at head-quarters, who should be accused. Judge, jury and testimony were also provided with the same ease. He had already taken such means of gaining the implicit confidence of his votaries, that his own suggestions were considered the best possible evidence, and the most infallible decision; and the optics of his followers becoming every day more keen, upon his authority, there was no want of the most suitable convicts. When the excitement had grown to such a height as to ensure the success of his scheme, he went the length of declaring, that the Great Spirit had directly endowed him with the power of pointing out, not only those who were in full possession of the diabolical art, but those who were impregnated with the least tincture of the diabolical disposition,—let them be old or young, male or female. This convenient arrangement proving perfectly satisfactory, he had only to speak the word,—or, as Heckewelder expresses it, even to nod,—and the pile was prepared for whomsoever he thought proper to devote. The Indians universally have an extreme horror of a wizard or a witch, which no reputation, rank, age, or services, are sufficient to counteract; and of course, resistance or remonstrance on the part even of an accused chieftain, only went to exasperate, and to make more speedy, the sure destruction which awaited him.

Among the sufferers, were a great sachem of the Delawares, and three of his staunch friends. Another eminent victim was the Wyandot chief, known by the English name of *Leather-*

lips, whose Indian appellation, Shateyaronrah, appears among the signatures to Wayne's famous treaty of Greenville. He was sixty-three years of age, had sustained a most exemplary moral character, and was particularly attached to the American cause, as opposed to the English. The latter circumstance throws some light upon his fate. But whatever the accusation or the evidence was,—and probably the one constituted the other,—orders were given to an influential chief of the same nation with the convict, in the Prophet's service, who, with four other Indians, immediately started off in quest of him. He was found at home, and notified of the sentence which had been passed upon him. He entreated, reasoned and promised, but all in vain. The inexorable messengers of death set about digging his grave, by the side of his wigwam. He now dressed himself with his finest war-clothes, and having refreshed himself with a hasty meal of venison, knelt down on the brink of the grave. His executioner knelt with him, and offered up a prayer to the Great Spirit in his behalf. This was the last ceremony. The Indians withdrew a few paces, and seated themselves around him on the ground. 'The old chief,' says the original describer of this horrid scene,* 'inclined forward, resting his face upon his hand, his hand upon his knees; while thus seated, one of the young Indians came up, and struck him twice with the tomahawk. For some time, he lay senseless on the ground; the only remaining evidence of life being a faint respiration. The Indians all stood around in solemn silence. Finding him to breathe longer than they expected, they called upon the whites [one or two of whom were spectators], to take notice how hard he died; pronounced him a wizard,—no good,—then struck him again, and terminated his existence. The office of burial was soon performed.' We have given these particulars, disagreeable as they are, to illustrate more clearly the astonishing influence of the Prophet, as well as the means by which he obtained it. The executioners in this case were apparently sincere and conscientious men; and one of the party was *a brother* of the victim.

The proceeding just described, bears on the face of it such manifest marks of the Prophet's style of doing business, as to have been attributed to his instigation, by general consent. That the charge does no great injustice to his real character, appears

* A correspondent cited in the *History of the Indian Nations*.

from many other well-authenticated transactions of a similar kind. Undoubtedly he was not, in all cases, without the advice of his brother; but it appears probable, that the latter was in favor of milder measures; and accordingly we find that, about the time when most of the Kickapoos joined the Indian Confederation, one of their leading men, a chieftain, opposed to the new-fangled doctrine and policy of the brothers, was quietly disabled by being reduced to a private capacity. The same course was taken with the Winebagoes, one of the most warlike and high-spirited tribes on the continent, and the most serviceable allies of the English in the late war. An Indian scout, sent to the Prophet's encampment by an American authority in 1810, to gain information of his designs, reported, that an old chief of that nation had told him, 'with tears in his eyes,' that all the village chiefs had been *divested of their power*, and that every thing was managed by the warriors. This, we apprehend, may have been an amendment suggested by Tecumseh, upon an original scheme of the Prophet, of which the credit belongs wholly to himself; and of which the authority just referred to was informed by a friendly Indjan of high standing, but a month or two before this. It was a proposal to the young men of many of the tribes, to murder *all* their principal chiefs, at one heat. The pretext was,—and it might have appeared a sufficient and righteous one in the mind of the Prophet,—that these were the men, who bartered their lands away to the Americans for a song, and traitorously connived at the inroads and trespasses of the settlers. But whatever was the professed object of the plan, and whatever the real motive, both the audacity and the ingenuity which it indicates, are none the less worthy of notice.

At other times, the banditti were reduced to an extreme scarcity of provisions, as might be expected from the numbers collected together, and the kind of life which they led. At first, they were given to understand that corn and pumpkins would be raised for them supernaturally; but the Prophet thought it might be easier to produce these essential articles by other means; and here was another reason, for maintaining a good understanding with his American neighbors. In the spring of 1808, such numbers of half-famished savages crowded about Fort Wayne, 'that it was considered necessary by the Governor, [Harrison,] to supply them with provisions, lest hun-

ger might drive them to extremities' *—a matter well understood by the Prophet. Soon afterwards, the latter gave out, that he proposed visiting the Governor at Vincennes, with the view of begging provisions,—‘for the white people had always encouraged him to preach the word of God to the Indians.’ This purpose was carried into execution; and it was upon this occasion, that the Governor was ‘completely deceived,’ as we have seen, by the Prophet’s appearance and language. So lately as 1811, a quantity of salt was sent up the Wabash for the Prophet’s use, together with another quantity, intended for the Kickapoos and other Indians. He seems to have balanced some time between necessity and policy, on this occasion; but he finally adopted the middle course of seizing upon the whole cargo, and sending a very civil apology to the Governor in payment.

It might have been expected, that a man of his pretensions, with so many rivals and enemies, would be exposed to the hazard of assassination. But here again he was on his guard; for it was always one of his strong positions, that the least violence offered to him or his followers, would be punished by the immediate interposition of the Great Spirit. The religious character, indeed, was sustained to the last. The Delaware messengers already mentioned found his forces at Tippecanoe in the highest state of excitement, owing to his magical rites, his harangues, and the war-dance which he performed with them day and night. Hence the unexampled bravery, manifested in the attack upon the American army. They rushed on the very bayonets of our troops; and in some instances, pressing aside the soldier’s musket, they brained him with the war-club. The Prophet, meanwhile, is said to have been comfortably seated on an adjacent eminence, singing a war-song. He had assured his followers, that the American bullets would do them no harm; and that while *they* should have light, their enemies should be involved in thick darkness.† Soon after the battle commenced, he was told that the Indians were falling. ‘Fight on! fight on!’ cried he, never at a loss, ‘it will soon be as I predicted;’ and he howled his war-song louder than ever. Undoubtedly he lost a good deal of his influence, by the event of the

* Dawson’s Narrative, pp. 105—107.

† He was not so much out of the way in this prediction, as in some others. McAfee observes, that the *camp-fires*, so long as they remained burning, were ‘more serviceable to the Indians than our men.’

battle ; but much of it was finally restored, and the misfortune in this case was sagely attributed, by the multitude, to the important circumstance of his wife having touched some of his sacred utensils. Nothing but a series of triumphs on the part of the American forces, the death of his brother, and the loss of all his best friends of his own tribe, (for the Kishópokes were reduced to about twenty warriors during the war,) finally destroyed his character as a prophet. When this was effected, it was human nature to degrade him below the level of a man.

The death of his brother we have told ; and we come now to remark briefly upon a few prominent points, in the career and character of that distinguished chieftain. We have described Elskwátawa as ingenious and insinuating, with more assurance than energy, and more ambition than principle. Tecumseh, on the other hand, while he equalled the Prophet in the quickness of his faculties, far surpassed him in the intrepidity and dignity so essential among any people, savage or civilized, to a stable and legitimate influence. Elskwátawa managed well the business which was given him ; but he was content to do it in secret, and glad to do it in safety,—much as he overlooked from his mountain-seat the battle of Tippecanoe. Tecumseh, meanwhile, was ranging the continent from North to South, from East to West ; threatening, flattering, rousing resentment, alarming superstitious, provoking curiosity ;—thus extending the limits of his grand Confederation, year by year, from tribe to tribe ; but slowly, calmly and in silence. No labor fatigued, no difficulty or disappointment disheartened, no danger alarmed, no emergency surprised him. It was by his means chiefly, that the extravagant stories of his brother's supernatural power were propagated, so soon and so simultaneously as they were, among a hundred different tribes, sometimes by himself, and sometimes by his agents.* Hence, so early as 1807, General

* 'The most absurd stories were told and believed by the Indians, of his power to perform miracles ; and no fatigue or suffering were thought too great to be endured, to get a sight of him.'—*McAfee*. This writer observes, elsewhere, that Tecumseh visited all the tribes west of the Mississippi, and on lakes Superior, Huron and Michigan, 'repeatedly,' before the year 1811. Soon after his return from the South, Tecumseh visited Fort Wayne. He still appeared haughty and obstinate in the opinions he had hitherto maintained, and even had the effrontery to demand ammunition of the commandant, which was refused him. He then said, that he would go to his British father, who would not refuse him,—appeared thoughtful and sullen for a while,—then turned on his

Harrison 'discovered, that *the Shawanese tribe in particular* were devoted to the British interest.'* Hence the strange movements, perceivable at the same period, among the various tribes of Indians around the lakes. They were assembling in council, day and night, and belts of wampum and pipes were sent in all directions. Hence, a desertion or disaffection no sooner happened in the Prophet's settlement, than new forces were mustered. For four years, it has been truly said, Tecumseh was in constant motion; to-day visible on the Wabash; then heard of on the shores of Erie or Michigan, now among the Indians of the Mississippi. Finally, when every thing was effected in the North and West which *he* could effect there, he commenced a laborious and hazardous journey of months, among the remote tribes of the South. The train was laid everywhere but here; and the subsequent trouble given by the Creeks,—justly attributed to his influence,—indicates sufficiently what might have been accomplished in time, had his confederates been as prudent as himself.

The battle of Tippecanoe was a premature explosion, and a most unfortunate one for his interests. It intercepted the negotiations for new allies, diminished the moral power of the Prophet, and frightened and forced many, who were or would have been his adherents, into neutrality in some cases, and open hostility in others. The vast scheme of Tecumseh, the object so long of all his solicitude and his labor was thrown into confusion, on the very brink of success. He was exasperated, humiliated, afflicted. He could have wept as Philip did, when *his* projects, so similar to Tecumseh's, were thwarted in mid career by the rashness of his warriors. But here was the trial of his noblest qualities. He came forward and made every proposition, looking like compromise, which he deemed consistent with his dignity,—perhaps necessary to it,—but in vain. He saw then, plainly, that the battle must be fought, and his soul grew strong. The wrongs and woes of his race, and the power and pride of the white men, passed before him. The mortification of failure and exposure on his own part, the dishonor brought upon his brother's name, the ignominy of submission, the censure and scorn of his savage rivals, the triumph

heel, raised the war-whoop, and went off.—*McAfee*. We are obliged in this case to quote from memory, but feel quite confident of our substantial correctness.

* Dawson's Narrative.

of his civilized enemy, all were daggers in his bosom. Then boiled within him the frenzy of despair. Then fear and hope struggled for the mastery. Pride, revenge, ambition, were roused. Let them come, then, thought he, I hear them and see them, in the South and in the East, like the summer leaves rolling and rustling in the breeze. It is well. Shall Tecumseh tremble? Shall they say that he hated the white man, and feared him? No! The mountains and the plains which the Great Spirit gave, are behind and around me. I too have *my* warriors, and here,—where we were born and where we will die,—on the Scioto, on the Wabash, on the broad waters of the North, *my* voice shall be heard.

Those who know any thing of the history of the last war, need not be informed, that Tecumseh was substantially, as well as nominally, the head and life of the Anglo-Indian Department, and that greater forces were collected by his influence, and embodied under his command, than in any other instance from the first settlement of the country. He brought in six hundred Wabash recruits in one body, early in 1813. In the attack made upon Fort Stephenson, in the summer of the same year, the enemy numbered but five hundred British regulars, for eight hundred Indians, (under Dickson) while Tecumseh was at the same time stationed on the road to Fort Meigs with a body of two thousand more, for the purpose of cutting off the American reinforcements on that route.

It should be observed, that only eighteen months before this, the disastrous defeat of the savages at Tippecanoe had restored 'the most profound tranquillity' upon the whole line of the frontiers, where, previously, 'scarcely a fortnight passed without some depredation having been committed;' and that all the information received by Governor Harrison,—who had better opportunities of receiving it than any other man,—agreed in the utter despondency of the Prophet's party.* So, as lately as July, 1812, we gather from the letter of Captain Wells to the Governor, already cited, that the Indians, who were under the British influence before that date, 'had all, *with the exception of Tecumseh and about one hundred*, abandoned their alliance,'—owing in a considerable degree, we suppose, to the apprehensions excited by the expedition of General Hull. On the very day when this letter was written, the brother of Tecumseh, our

* Dawson's Narrative, pp. 254, 257.

far-famed Prophet, left Fort Wayne, (the station of Captain Wells) for his old settlement at Tippecanoe. 'He will remain at his village,' adds the writer, '*until he knows the intentions of the Western Indians*. If they will not join him, he will then go and endeavor to save himself by pretensions of peace to the commissioners at Piqua.' At this period, then, the intention of the Indians was not ascertained. They might or might not join the Americans, but as yet they had only abandoned the British. And yet, in a twelvemonth afterwards, Tecumseh was himself commanding a body of two thousand of them, and co-operating with eight hundred more under General Proctor!

So much for his energy and his influence. The *minutiæ* of his system of recruiting and retaining, we cannot be expected to furnish. That he exerted himself personally, we have already seen:—that he plied also the industry of the Prophet, and that the latter personage was quite pliable, as well as in sane mind, appears from the following passages of the authentic and amusing communication, last referred to.

'On the 12th inst. July, 1812, the Prophet arrived here, (Fort Wayne) with nearly one hundred Winebagoes and Kickapoos, who have ever since been amusing the Indian agent at this place with professions of friendship. It is now evident, that he has completely duped the agent, who had suffered him to take the lead in all his councils with the Indians, giving him ammunition, &c. to support his followers, until they can receive a supply from Tecumseh.

'On the 19th inst. an express arrived in the Prophet's camp, from Tecumseh. In order that it should make the better speed, the express stole a horse from some of the inhabitants of the river Raisin, and rode night and day. The horse gave out within twenty miles from this place. The express was directed by Tecumseh to tell the Prophet to unite the Indians immediately, and send their women and children towards the Mississippi, while the warriors should strike a heavy blow at the inhabitants of Vincennes; that he, Tecumseh, if he lived, would join him in the country of the Winebagoes.

'The Prophet found no difficulty in keeping this information to himself and one or two of his confidential followers, and forming a story to suit the palate of the agent here; and on the 20th inst. despatched two confidential Kickapoos to effect the objects Tecumseh had in view. In order that these two might make the better speed, they stole my two riding-horses, and have gone

to the westward at the rate of one hundred miles in twenty-four hours, at least.

‘To keep the agent blind to his movements, the Prophet went early in the morning, yesterday, and told the agent that two of his *bad* young men were missing, and that he feared they had stolen some horses; the agent found no difficulty in swallowing the bait offered him, and applauded the Prophet for his honesty.

‘To keep up appearances, the latter has this morning (the 22d) despatched two men *on foot*, as he tells the agent, to bring back my horses, &c., and that he and his party will certainly attend the meeting of the commissioners at Piqua. This he will do, if he finds he cannot raise the Western Indians. If he finds they will join him, he will strike a heavy blow, as Tecumseh calls it, against the whites in that quarter. You may rely on the correctness of this statement, as I received information relative to the views of Tecumseh, last night, from a quarter that cannot be doubted. The conduct of the agent towards the Prophet, I have been an eye-witness to.’

It will be recollected, that Tecumseh had passed Fort Wayne about a week previous to the date of this letter, on his way to Malden. He then declared, that his object was to obtain ammunition from the British Government for the Indians at Tippecanoe; and it was understood accordingly, a few days afterwards, that while his brother was playing tricks upon the agent, he had openly connected himself with that Government, against the Americans. The whole transaction is characteristic of the two individuals, who were the chief actors in it. The Prophet resorted, without hesitation, to all the wiles of Indian cunning and stratagem, for effecting his own purposes, and for thwarting those of his opponents. The course of Tecumseh was as manly and dignified, as it was prompt. It had been so, indeed, from the first; for although he was certainly under no obligation to disclose his schemes, he appears never to have taken much pains to conceal them. We know that he was *subsequently* suspected and accused, of having been actively engaged in inducing general hostility, as well as instigating particular outrages among the frontier tribes, for several years before much was actually known of him. This may have been the case, and it may not; the evidence, so far as we have seen, amounts to nothing, and the suspicion and accusation alluded to, like the offences themselves, are very easily accounted for upon other and obvious grounds. Of course, there is no necessity of going at length into the history

of the Western country for the last half century, to point out the real grounds of complaint and the real provocations to hostility, which Tecumseh, or his brother, or any other Indian of information and reflection *might* have alleged on the part of the tribes, against the American Government or the American people. This would be justifying what we do not admit. It is sufficient to observe that quite enough had occurred, to furnish plausible pretexts for all that the chieftain is known to have done or attempted to do. Governor Harrison stated in his annual message, for 1809, to the Indiana Legislature, that owing to defects in the Federal law, 'every person has been allowed to trade with the Indians that pleases; *which proves a source of numberless abuses*, of mischievous effects, both to them and ourselves.' Two years before, we find an opinion advanced by the same excellent authority on a similar occasion, that 'the utmost efforts to induce them (the Indians) to take up arms would be unavailing, *if one only, of the many persons who have committed murders on their people, could be brought to punishment.*' To illustrate the truth of this remark, we may mention the murder of a Creek Indian at Vincennes, early in 1810, and of course subsequently to the particular transactions alluded to in the message. He was shot by a white man, an Italian trader, upon the pretext that the Indian, who was intoxicated, had shown a disposition to do him some injury. The Governor discharged *his* duty by causing the Italian to be arrested and tried; but, in the language of our informant, 'as in too many other cases, acquittal was the consequence.'* We are farther told, that about the same time, two Indians were wounded by a white man, at a few miles' distance from Vincennes. The occurrence of circumstances of this nature, is said to have been a source of great embarrassment and vexation to Governor Harrison; but in this case, he could only send out,—not a constable for the aggressor, for that course had been sufficiently tried,—but a surgeon for the wounded men, who both finally recovered. It cannot be doubted, that the character of these proceedings was well understood, and indignantly resented by all the tribes which obtained knowledge of them,—as most of them did in the course of their own experience. The house of a white man in Ohio was robbed, during this same summer, by a mem-

* Dawson's Narrative, page 179.

ber of the Delaware tribe, so famous for its faithful, and more than faithful adherence to the American cause. According to the stipulations of Wayne's treaty, expressly provided for giving up criminals to the parties respectively injured,—and scrupulously observed up to this date, we should add, on the part of the Indians,—the robber in the present instance was demanded of the Delawares. The answer was, that the nation never would give up another man, until some of the white people were punished, who had murdered members of their tribe; they would, however, punish him themselves. And they did accordingly put him to death.

But all these were trifling causes of irritation, compared with those which had occurred at various periods, in the treaties and other negotiations, public and private, whereby immense quantities of territory had been obtained of the Indians. It is not intended to insinuate, that the Government was in fault upon any of these occasions. But in the transaction of affairs of this nature, to such an extent, at such a distance, by the instrumentality of agents,—as likely as any other men to be sometimes ignorant, insolent, and avaricious,—offences must needs come. On the other hand, in cases wherein the Government was not even nominally concerned, (whatever the understanding of the vendors might be upon that point) the most flagitious deception had been practised. In still other instances, where the conduct of the purchasers was unobjectionable, there were conflicting claims to territory, which one or more tribes, or portions of tribes, or perhaps individual chiefs, nevertheless undertook to convey. Owing to these and similar causes, the tribes had very generally become extremely suspicious of proposals for the purchase of land. They perceived, too, independently of any unfair dealing upon either side, that the white settlements were advancing upon them with the most formidable rapidity. Something must be done, then, in self-defence. Setting aside past impositions, it was absolutely necessary to prevent them for the future; and setting aside all imposition, it was necessary to raise some universal and effectual barrier against inroads of any kind, upon any quarter. It is recorded, accordingly, by a historian already cited, that the agitation among the Indians at this time was accounted for by some of them, by saying, that they were endeavoring to effect what had frequently been recommended to them by the United States, viz., *a more effective and cordial union*

among the various tribes. The writer considers this an 'attempt at deception;' but his facts appear, in this instance, to outweigh his opinion. War might or might not be anticipated as an ultimate resort, in offence or defence; and 'British agitators' might or might not be actually engaged, as certainly they were interested, in producing that result, and preparing the tribes for it. But it seems to us that there can be no reasonable doubt, that an effective and cordial union of the tribes, for the purposes just mentioned, was actually the precise object in view. It certainly was the leading principle in the schemes of Tecumseh.

This principle he never disavowed. He declared it in the most open manner, on every suitable occasion; and with it the cogent reasoning, upon which in his mind it was founded. In July, 1810, he conversed very fully upon the subject, with a person sent to his brother by the Governor of Indiana, to dissuade him from war and to gain information of his views. He said that the Great Spirit had given this great island,—meaning the American continent,—to his red children; but the whites, who were placed on the other side of the big water, not content with their share, had crossed over,—seized upon the coast,—driven the Indians from the sea to the lakes,—undertaken to say that this tract belongs to one tribe, this to another, and so on,—when *the Great Spirit had made it the common property of them all.* They had retreated far enough,—they would go no farther. He at the same time disclaimed having intended to make war, but expressed his opinion that it would not be possible to preserve peace, unless the Indian principle of common property should be recognised, and the progress of the white settlements discontinued. He then proposed going to Vincennes, for the purpose of convincing the Governor that matters had been mis-represented to him. The visit accordingly took place in August; and he then stated most distinctly,—Mr. Dawson's phrase is, in the broadest manner,—that his policy had been to establish and extend the principle of common property as a means of necessary self-defence; that the tribes were afraid of being pushed back into the lakes, and were therefore determined to make a stand where they now were. At the formal interview which ensued, Tecumseh, who was attended by a body of followers, manifested so much irritation, that the Governor apprehended an attack upon the spot; the citizens were alarmed; troops were called in; and a scene of great

confusion ensued. But although the proud chieftain apologized for this demonstration of spirit at the next conference, and then appeared perfectly cool, he still persisted in the statements made in the outset. When asked by the Governor, whether it was his intention to prevent the surveying of a certain territory, recently purchased, he answered, 'that himself and those who were joined with him were determined, that the old boundary should continue.' The Governor afterwards visited him at his camp, for the purpose of sounding him privately. Being asked if his intentions were really what he had openly avowed, he replied that they were. He had no complaint to make against the United States, but their purchasing the Indian land as they did; and he should very much regret the necessity of making war for this single cause. On the contrary, he was anxious to be upon good terms with them. If the President would give up the late purchase, and agree to make no more in the same manner, he would even become their ally, and would fight with them against the English. If these terms could not be complied with, he should be obliged to fight with the English against *them*. The Governor assured him that the President should be informed of his views, but also expressed his opinion, that there was no prospect of their being acceded to. 'Well!' answered the warrior, 'as the Great Chief is to determine the matter, I hope the Great Spirit will put sense enough in his head, to induce him to give up the land. True he is so far off, that the war will not injure him. He may sit still in his town and drink his wine, while you and I will have to fight it out.' At the last conference, which took place previously to the battle of Tippecanoe, it is stated that his designs were more completely developed, than ever before.* And this, it should be observed, was his own voluntary and deliberate disclosure. 'The States had set the example,' he said, of forming a union among all the fires,—why should they censure the Indians for following it?' He had now succeeded in combining the Northern tribes, and he was about visiting the South, for the purpose of completing the scheme. But war, if it ensued, would be no fault of his. He hoped that the Governor would prevent settlements from being made on the new purchase, till he returned from his journey in the Spring. He would then visit the President himself at his leisure, and the matter should be settled with *him*. This speech has been called 'an

* Dawson's Narrative, p. 183.

artful evasion, easily seen through.' It appears to us, on the contrary, to be a model of manly frankness. The orator did not expressly state, indeed, that the combination alluded to anticipated the possibility or probability of war. But this was unnecessary. It was the natural inference in any reasonable mind. It had been frequently so stated and so understood. Repetition could only exasperate. On the whole, Tecumseh seems to have manifested a noble dignity in the avowal and discussion of his policy, equalled only by the profound sagacity in which it originated, and the intelligent energy which conducted it, through every opposition and obstacle, so nearly to its completion. He might be wrong, but it is evident enough that he was sincere.

As for British instigation, we need not suggest the distinction between a disposition upon their part, and a counter disposition upon his; or between himself and the motley multitude of fanatical and ferocious vagabonds, who, unfortunately, formed a large part of the Prophet's first congregation, and some of whom were as troublesome to each other and to him, as they were to the white settlers. Outrages were committed, as we have seen, on both sides, and criminals refused to be given over to justice by both,—the Indians copying in this respect, the example of the American authorities. But we need not pursue this subject. The best existing evidence with regard to Tecumseh's particular interest in it, seems to be his own, which has been given. Nor can it be doubted, that he perfectly *understood* the policy of the English. He told Governor Harrison, when he declared the necessity which might arise of an alliance with them, that he knew they were always urging the Indians to war for their own advantage, and not to benefit his countrymen. 'And here,' we are informed,* '*he clapped his hands, and imitated a person hallooing at a dog, to set him fighting with another, thereby insinuating, that the British thus endeavored to set the Indians on the Americans.*' The truth is, he was too proud for a subordinate part. His confederates might do as they chose, but for himself, he would maintain the dignity of a free and brave man, and a warrior. He abandoned his plan of visiting the President, because he could not be received as the head of the deputation. It is said, that, in the last conference at Vincennes, he found himself, at the end of a long and animated speech, unprovided with a

* Dawson's Narrative. p. 159.

seat. Observing the neglect, Governor Harrison directed a chair to be placed for him, and requested him to accept it. 'Your Father,' said the interpreter, 'requests you to take a chair.' 'My Father!' replied the chief, 'the sun is my father, and the earth is my mother; I will repose upon her bosom.' And he adjusted himself on the ground in the Indian manner.

A qualified remark has been made upon his courage; but the manner in which he conducted himself during the war, is sufficient to establish this point beyond controversy. The same may be said of the fearlessness shown in his visits to Vincennes; and especially, in his exposure of himself on that occasion, though he must have perceived that he was feared, suspected, and even guarded by large bodies of troops, drawn out for that express purpose. It is very illustrative of the apparent diversity in the character of Elskwátawa and his own in this respect, that when the Delawares sent a deputation of chiefs to break up the Prophet's settlement at Tippecanoe, the latter would not *deign*, as Mr. Dawson expresses it, to give them an interview; *but despatched his brother to them*, 'whose threats or persuasions were sufficient to drive back the chiefs, with strong indications of apprehension and terror.' When General Proctor began to prepare for retreating from Malden, Tecumseh, having learned his intention, demanded an interview, and, in the name of all the Indians, delivered an animated speech. If the spirit, which it manifests, could have had its intended effect in inducing the General to fight before he retreated, the result must at least have been more glorious, if not more favorable to his cause.

'Father!' he began, 'Listen to your children! You have them now all before you.* The war before this, our British Father gave the hatchet to his red children, when our old chiefs were alive. They are now dead. In that war, our Father was thrown on his back by the Americans, and our Father took them by the hand without our knowledge. We are afraid he will do so again this time.

'Listen! When war [the last war] was declared, our Father stood up and gave us the tomahawk, and told us that he was then ready to strike the Americans,—that he wanted our assistance,—that he would certainly get us our land back, which the Americans had taken from us.

*The phraseology generally adopted by Indian deputations, to express their representative character.

‘Listen! When we were last at the Rapids, it is true, we gave you little assistance. It is hard to fight people who live like ground-hogs. [Alluding to the American fortifications.]

‘Father, listen! Our fleet has gone out. We know they have fought. We have heard the great guns;—[Perry’s victory,]—but we know not what has become of our Father with one arm, [Commodore Barclay.] Our ships have gone one way, and we are astonished to see our Father tying up every thing, and preparing to run away the other, without letting his red children know of his intentions. You always told us, you would never draw your foot off British ground. But now, Father, we see you are drawing back, and we are sorry to see our Father doing so without seeing the enemy. We must compare our Father’s conduct to that of a fat dog, that carries its tail upon its back; but when frightened, drops it between its legs and runs off.

‘Father, listen! The Americans have not yet defeated us by land,—we are not sure that they have by water;—we wish, therefore, to remain here and fight. If they defeat us, we will *then* retreat with our Father.

‘Father! You have got the arms and ammunition, which our great Father sent for his red children. If you have an idea of going away, give them to us, and you may go and welcome for us. Our lives are in the hands of the Great Spirit,—we are determined to defend our lands,—and if it be his will, we wish to leave our bones upon them.’

This celebrated speech is probably as good a specimen as any on record, of the *eloquence* of Tecumseh. It was a natural eloquence, characteristic, as all natural eloquence must be, of the qualities of the man. As Charlevoix says of the Canadian savages, it was ‘such as the Greeks admired in the barbarians,’—strong, stern, sententious, pointed, perfectly undisguised. It abounded with figures and with graphic touches, imprinted by a single effort of memory or imagination, but answering all the purposes of detailed description, without its tediousness or weakness. The President was ‘drinking his wine in his town,’ while Tecumseh and Harrison were fighting it out over the mountains. The Indians were halloosed upon the Americans, like a pack of starved hounds. The British nation was our great Father, and our great Father was laid flat on his back. So the policy of the United States, in extending their settlements, was a *mighty water*, and the scheme of common property in the tribes, was a *dam* to resist it.* Tecumseh

* McAfee’s History, p. 17.

belonged to a nation, noted, as Heckewelder describes them, 'for much talk;' and he was himself never at a loss for words. He was a countryman of Logan, too, and he reasoned and felt like him. His whole time and talents were devoted to the cause of Indian independence; and when he spoke upon this theme, as he generally did in public, his fine countenance lighted up; his firm and erect frame swelled with a deep emotion, which scarcely his own stern dignity could suppress; every posture and gesture had its meaning; and language flowed burning and swift from the passion-fountains of the soul.

We have drawn the portrait of this eminent chieftain hitherto, only so far as to sketch some of those strongly marked lineaments, by which he was best known to his contemporaries, and by which he will be longest remembered. But there was something more in his character, than strong savage talent and savage feeling. Injured and irritated as he often was, and constantly as he kept himself excited by an interest in the fate of his countrymen, and by the agitation of his own schemes, there is no evidence either of coarseness in his manners, or of cruelty in his conduct. For reasons easily to be imagined, he regarded Governor Harrison with less partiality, than most other individual Americans; and hence, the British General is said to have stipulated early in the war, that the Governor, if taken prisoner, should be *his* captive. But he is understood to have always treated that gentleman with such courtesy, that we apprehend, had this *casus fœderis* unfortunately occurred, he would have gloried only in conveying him off the battle-field in the manner of the Black Prince, and in setting before him, with the royal munificence of Massasoit, all the dry pease in his wigwam. When the Governor proposed to him, on his first visit to Vincennes in 1810, that, in the event of a war, he would as far as possible put a stop to the cruelties which the Indians were accustomed to inflict upon women and children, and others, no longer in a situation to resist,—he readily gave his assent to the proposition, and voluntarily pledged himself to adhere to it. There is reason to believe, that he remembered this promise; and that, amidst temptations and provocations,—and, many would be inclined to add, *examples*, from an authority he might have been supposed to respect,—of an extraordinary nature. In one of the sorties from Fort Meigs, a hundred or more of the American garrison were taken prisoners, and put into Fort Miami. Here, McAfee and others relate

that the British Indians garnished the surrounding rampart, and amused themselves by loading and firing at the crowd within, or at particular individuals. This proceeding is said to have continued nearly two hours, during which time twenty of the unfortunate prisoners were massacred. The *Chiefs* were, at the same time, holding a council, to determine the fate of the residue. A bloodthirsty mob of cut-throat Potawatamies were warmly in favor of despatching them all, on the spot, while the Wyandots and Miamies opposed that course. The former prevailed; and had already systematically commenced the work of destruction, when Tecumseh, descrying them from the batteries, came down among them, reprimanded the ring-leaders for their dastardly barbarity in murdering defenceless captives in cold blood, and thus saved the lives of a considerable number. That all this was done by express permission of the English commander, and in presence of the English army, as is farther stated, it does not belong to us, in the pursuit of our present subject, either to assert or prove. If there be any truth in the charge, or in a tithe of those of the same character which have been brought against the same party, the sooner the veil of oblivion is dropped over them, the better.

On the whole, the character of Tecumseh, in whatever light it may be viewed, must be regarded as remarkable in the highest degree. That he proved himself worthy of his rank as a general officer in the army of his Britannic Majesty, or even of his reputation as a great warrior among all the Indians of the North and West, is, indeed, a small title to distinction. Bravery is a savage virtue; and the Shawanees are a brave people; too many of the American nation have ascertained this fact by experience. His oratory speaks more for his genius. It was the utterance of a great mind, roused by the strongest motives of which human nature is susceptible, and developing a power and a labor of reason, which commanded the admiration of the civilized, as justly as the confidence and pride of the savage. But other orators, too, have appeared among his countrymen, as eloquent and as eminent as Tecumseh, wherever the same moving causes and occasions could give birth and scope to the same emulous effort. And the mere oratory, in all these cases, was not so much an absolute vindication, as a naked and meagre index of the mighty intellect and the noble spirit within. Happily for the fame of Tecumseh, other evidences exist in his favor,—such as were felt as well as heard in his own

day,—such as will live on the pages of civilized history, long after barbarous tradition has forgotten them. He will be named with Philip and Pontiac, the ‘agitators’ of the two centuries which preceded his own. The schemes of these men were,—fortunately for the interest which they lived and labored to resist,—alike unsuccessful in their issue; but none the less credit should, for that reason, be allowed to their motives or their efforts. They were still statesmen, though the communities over which their influence was exerted, were composed of red men instead of white. They were still patriots, though they fought only for wild lands and for wild liberty. Indeed, it is these very circumstances that make these very efforts,—and especially the extraordinary degree of success which attended them,—the more honorable and the more signal; while they clearly show the necessity of their ultimate failure, which existed in the nature of things. They are the best proofs, at once, of genius and of principle.

ART. VI.—*Sparks's Life of Gouverneur Morris.*

The Life of Gouverneur Morris, with Selections from his Correspondence and Miscellaneous Papers; detailing Events in the American Revolution, the French Revolution, and in the Political History of the United States. By JARED SPARKS. In three volumes. Boston. Gray & Bowen. 1832.

There is no sin which more easily besets the biographer of public men, than a reluctance to admit the fact, that they ever had any private life; yet we know not that the dignity of a statesman would be impaired by such an admission, or that the parlor and the fire-side are much less interesting, than the cabinet or the legislative hall. Sir James Mackintosh assures us, that the biographer should introduce historical detail no farther, than the clearness and accuracy of his narrative require; and that the historian, on the other hand, should be careful to avoid all private particulars, which cannot be regarded as essential. The rule is certainly a judicious one; and it has been faithfully applied in his own biography of one of the greatest and best men in England's annals. But it is hard to bring the conviction of its justice home to others; the